THE DISSEMINATOR

Nova Scotia Provincial Library

ISSN:1209-2473

THEDISSEMINATOR
V.4, #8 August, 1997

An electronic newsletter from the Nova Scotia Provincial Library

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2008-00029/

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NEW LOOK FOR PL WEB SITE

The Provincial Library's web site (http://www.library.ns.ca) has= recently undergone a facelift. The new front page design, which fits into= one screen display, makes for a shorter load time but still manages to= include all the same information. No scrolling necessary! Look for more= changes to come in the near future as we are awaiting the arrival of a new= Web site development tool. =20

Also new on the Web is the NS Government's online job application form. Not= only can you browse through current Nova Scotia Civil Service job postings= (http://www.gov.ns.ca/hu= mr/employ/index. htm) but you can also apply for a job without ever= leaving the Web site.

NEW COORDINATOR OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Sheldon Mitchell has returned to Nova Scotia to take on the role of= Coordinator of School Libraries following eight years as a= Teacher-librarian and Consultant with the Vancouver School Board. Previous= to that, he enjoyed twelve years as Teacher-librarian and Supervisor with= the former Halifax County - Bedford District School Board.

Sheldon's current assignment is quite challenging. With the vast quantities= of information being created daily, educators are faced with a greater= challenge than ever to engage students in selecting appropriate resources= as well as retrieving, evaluating and using the information in appropriate= ways. Resources range from traditional print media to newer CD-ROM and= on-line databases. School libraries should be the hub of this activity in= all schools in the province.

Sheldon looks forward to his coordinating role, meeting with colleagues in= the Department of Education and Culture, School Board officials, teachers,= teacher-librarians, parents and all who have a stake in quality education.= Sheldon plans to meet with an Advisory Committee and will help to develop= policies to clearly define goals for school library development in Nova= Scotia. He also plans to be involved with issues such as automation and= technology, intellectual freedom and information literacy. He can be= contacted by phone at 424-2453 or by e-mail at mitchels@gov.ns.ca.

TELECOMMUNITIES =9197 CONFERENCE

The Telecommunities '97 Conference, which took place August 15-18, was the= fifth one of its kind,

and its theme was "Partnerships". Gathered together= were representatives from many organizations and levels of government= interested in how to work together to meet the goal of universal computer= literacy in an information society. The desire is to build the "electronic= commons", as a successor to the old physical public commons or virtual town= hall meeting.=20

The board of Telecommunities Canada now formally represents all the= community networks in Canada. Some of the main speakers were seasoned= social activists, working for many years to persuade governments to= support social justice and develop an informed citizenry. One of these was= Ed Schwartz, based in Philadelphia, who developed LibertyNet (http://libertynet.org/). (See Professional Reading below for comments on his= book "NetActivism")

The conference generated a lot of excitement, as both organizers and= attendees listened to the experiences of others detail how they struggled= to find funding, etc. as they continue to survive/thrive. Community= networks are all about finding ways to improve the quality of life for the= geographic (local and/or global) community. The ways to do this are= limited only by one's imagination.=20

Groups use their community nets as a way of linking diverse members of the= community together and stress the technological and social skills gained by= volunteers; all emphasize that the benefits are incalculable, and that the= access must remain at no or minimal cost to the users. There was one= refrain heard over and over again - that individuals must feel welcome to= come in and learn about the Internet in a comfortable setting, and that= there be well-trained staff or volunteers to teach members of the public as= much as they want to know.

Some of the issues that remain as challenges, once the physical= infrastructure has been built and full public access has been provided in= Canada, include:=20

Literacy - both print and computer, have a long way to go, especially when a= lot of emphasis is put on the under-served members of society, who= generally do not have access to computers at home.=20

Apathy - there is still a widespread attitude that computer literacy has no= application to ordinary people; even some libraries have not been= approachable in cooperating with the local community net. =20

Control - business now dominates the WWW- in the last five years, the volume= of commercial traffic has shot up from less than 5% to 80% of the WWW= content.=20

Sustainability - where is business involved, in relation to helping pay for= the networks? Several speakers spoke about adding value to information that= already existed. Business will pay for good service from community network= providers and may contribute to the economic development of their area. = =20

Role of Libraries - libraries continue to play a key role in developing= quality networks. For example,

libraries prepare electronic pathfinders= or resource lists for job and career seekers, in some cases linking many= sites together such as government information sites and university home= pages. Such initiatives can help new immigrants find jobs, housing,= education, etc.=20

Partnerships - there are traditional links between the objectives of= community networks and libraries. There is a common value system between= them which is based on social justice.=20

Information technology is a powerful tool which any community can take and= apply for themselves in all sorts of creative ways. The challenges that= remain can be better faced and overcome if all the players work as a team.= -- Carole Compton-Smith

"CAP"ING OUR RESOURCES

On Thursday August 14, a meeting was held in Halifax to discuss the= Provincial Library's role in the Community Access Program. The Community= Access Program, also known as CAP, is aimed at getting people from rural= communities interested and involved in using the Internet. Through the= work of Carole Compton-Smith and Michael Colborne, a group of branch head= librarians learned how the CAP program could not only benefit their= communities but the libraries themselves, in gaining new resources, extra= funding, greater recognition and participation on the part of the public. = Throughout the meeting, Craig J. Cormier, Regional Coordinator of WiNS, and= Provincial Librarian, Marion Pape, illustrated how libraries in Nova Scotia= have been successful in a number of ways.

With the incredible success of the River John and Glace Bay community access= sites as well as many others, Marion Pape discussed why libraries make= excellent locations for the program. She indicated that what made these= sites so successful was that libraries already understood how to use and= find information. They also deal with the public on a regular basis. = Moreover, they were already well-established public access points in those= communities. "I would like to see libraries get more involved with other= organizations and become community access points in the South/Eastern Shore= regions" says Cormier. "If libraries take some initiative in this program,= I see nothing but great success for everyone!"

Industry Canada wants to create 5000 new sites throughout Canada by the year= 2000, offering up to $30,000 for those who wish to take on the challenge. = Nova Scotia has been quite successful in this endeavour creating 56 sites= so far with additional proposal requests occurring daily. The meeting was= an excellent opportunity for the branch librarians to learn more about what= they can gain from this project. In the end all participants walked away= with a greater understanding of how community libraries can achieve greater= technological resources and build stronger community partnerships for the= future. Anyone interested in learning more about the Community Access= Program can contact Craig J. Cormier at 424-2459 or at cormiecj@gov.ns.ca. =20

INTRODUCTION TO A-G CANADA

On August 22, Kate How of Auto-Graphics with both Debbie Wallace and= Vanessa Kim of A-G Canada Ltd. came to Halifax to update their customers on= the direction this new company is taking. A-G Canada Ltd., a wholly owned= subsidiary of Auto-Graphics Inc. (A-G) of Ponoma, California, now holds the= CATTS and AVISO assets of ISM Library Information Services. The meeting at= the Provincial Library was well attended by many members of the local= library community with some from as far away as the Universite de Moncton.= A-G Canada will provide services to the Canadian and international library= communities from Etobicoke, Ontario, which many will recognize as the= previous location of the marketing arm of ISM.

During the presentation, Debbie and Vanessa, familiar to many of us due to= their long involvement with UTLAS, ISM and now A-G Canada, introduced us= to the parent company Auto-Graphics Inc. This company began as a= family-owned publishing business 40 years ago but now also produces the= IMPACT group of products. Their mandate is to use state-of-the-art= technology in four key areas - technical services, resource sharing,= reference and database services. The "ISM" database to which many Canadian= libraries have contributed over many years, will be moved this Fall from= the Tandem platform in Winnipeg to the more powerful SUN Spark system in= Ponoma, California. The database will not be merged with the Auto-Graphics= database, however, although links between the two will be provided.=20

For CATTS customers, the previous design of union and individual file= structures will be maintained, as will the authority control of Canadian= (French and English) names. The new SUN Spark platform will provide both a= GUI interface and also allow access to multiple databases under the Z39.50= search protocol. AVISO will be integrated with IMPACT ILL and will expand= the system interfaces to libraries such as CISTI, OCLC and the British= Library. These are a few of the improvements to service planned for the= near future, all of which will be supported by a Toronto-based help desk,= an increased Canadian sales staff, regional training sessions and a new= pricing strategy to reflect the many varied uses of A-G products and= services. Some attendees to the session expressed concern that while A-G= will continue to encourage contributions to the database from its Canadian= customers, both its location in the US and the lack of a firm committment= to bilingual records renders the national underpinnings of this Canadian= database in some jeopardy. It is to be hoped that A-G Canada, its staff,= its database and its many varied services will continue to represent the= very distinct needs of Canadian libraries as ably in the future as it has= in the past. -- Bridget Turner

SENIOR'S EXPO

The annual Senior's Expo in Halifax, which took place July 18 and 19,= provided an upbeat and lively venue for an information booth supported by= the Nova Scotia Provincial Library and the regional libraries of Nova= Scotia. An excellent display and staffing schedule was put in place for= the Senior's Expo by Nancy Fullerton of the Halifax Regional Library, Ann= Dunsworth of the Provincial Library and many trusty helpers. A selection= of Talking Books and adaptive videos were available for local senior= citizens to view and consider. This opportunity for libraries to reinforce= their services to an ever-growing segment of the population was further= enhanced by the fact that we had a prime location for the booth. About= 350-400 seniors took the opportunity to stop and chat with us.

ON-LINE REFERENCE ACCESS

The Provincial Library is now in the planning stages of offering regional= library access to two on-line reference databases. Information Access= Company's General Reference Center and Health Reference Center, both= excellent periodical indexes with some full-text, will soon be available to= Nova Scotia's regional libraries and their patrons through the Provincial= Library's Web site. Password accessible testing could be available as= early as the first week of September so stay tuned...

TRAINING NEWS

In early May of this year, the South Shore Regional Library's patron= database, consisting of nearly 20,000 records from their stand alone system= using FileMaker Pro, was successfully converted and loaded into Bank 9 of= NcompasS. On May 13, Johanna Cooper gave a training session in creating= and modifying patron records to Frances Anderson, Sharon Chapman, and Cathy= MacDonald, all of the South Shore Regional Library.

On June 16, seven staff members from the South Shore Regional Library= visited Provincial Library and received training from Johanna on the= Internet and NcompasS searching. The Internet training session consisted= of an in-depth look at two key Internet search tools (AltaVista and Excite)= while the NcompasS session focused on advanced searching techniques= (subject searching and combination searches).

On April 11, six staff members of the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library= attended the first of two Policies Management training sessions. This= session focused on policies for patron user categories. The second= session, covering policies for staff user categories, was presented on July= 22, 1997. Over the next weeks and months, PARL staff will be working on= defining the local policies that will allow them to customize the MultiLIS= system to meet their needs. Following the loading of bibliographic records= into PARL's databank (Bank 7) in early July, nine PARL staff members= received training on July 22 in updating and adding items in their= databank. =20

STAFFING NOTES

This month, the Provincial Library welcomes Sheldon Mitchell as the new= Coordinator of School Libraries (see article= above). Sheldon holds a B.A. and B. Ed. from Memorial University and= an MLS from Dalhousie University. Prior to joining the Provincial Library,= Sheldon worked as a Consultant for Teacher-librarianship in Vancouver. He= has also worked previously as a teacher-librarian in Vancouver and Halifax= County and as a Library Supervisor in Halifax County. Welcome aboard,= Sheldon!

LINKed

School days! School days! Or was that School daze?... it's all a blur now. = This month, with the

evenings growing colder and all the ads on TV for= school supplies, I thought I'd focus on educational sites. If you know of= any interesting sites or if you would like to suggest a theme for future= columns, please e-mail me (sdirani@nshpl.library.ns.ca=).

Web Elements
http://www.shef.ac.uk/uni/academic/A-C/chem/web-elements/main/in= dex-nofr.html
- If you can get past the long URL, this is a Web-based periodic table of= the elements. Click on one to find out its atomic number and weight,= symbol, plus all sorts of background information.

Cells Alive!
http://www.cellsalive.com/
- What do disease, sourdough bread, biological weapons and gold mines have= in common? You'll have to go this site to find out. It contains= information on cells of the immune system, bacteria, and parasites.

French Verb Conjugation
http://tu= na.uchicago.edu/forms_unrest/inflect.query.html
- Simply tell the automated verb conjugator the verb and tense of your= choice and...voila!...it comes back fully conjugated.

Cool School Tools!
http://www.bham.lib.al.us/coo= ltools/
- This is a neat collection of exactly what the title suggests. The Cool= School Tools are divided into subject categories and include links to such= things as Bill Nye the Science Guy and Science at Home. -- Sue Dirani

REFERENCE ON THE NET

More reference questions received at the NS Provincial Library which were= answered using the Internet.

Q. Patron needs copies of a couple of speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.

A. By entering the name Martin Luther King into a search engine such as= Excite (www.excite.com), I found The= Martin Luther King, Jr. Website at Stanford University (www-leland= .stanford.edu/group/King/Docs/docs.htm). The site has the text of= several speeches and is free to use but registration is required. Another= source was found at the Martin Luther King, Jr. page (www.almaz.com/nobel/pe= ace/1964a.html) at The Nobel Prize Internet Archive (www.almaz.com/nobel/nobel.ht= ml).

Q. Patron wants the history of the game of pool or billiards.

A. The keywords "history" and "billiards" were entered at the AltaVista= search engine (www.altavista.

digital.com). = This found "A Brief History of the Noble Game of Billiards", an essay by= Mike Shamos, Curator of The Billiard Archive (www.bca-pool.com/history/= hist.htm). -- Carol Morris

PROFESSIONAL READING

One book in this month's column deals with the key issue of copyright as it= affects Canadian public libraries while the other discusses public access= to the power of the Internet. These items can be borrowed from the= Provincial Library's professional collection through regular interlibrary= loan channels.

1) Hebert, Francoise - **Photocopying in Public Libraries in Canada:= Report of the 1996 Survey**. Ottawa: Canadian Library Association, 1996.= (Call# Prof 025 .12 Heb)

This publication is a detailed study of photocopying practices in public= libraries in Canada and was completed in response to a need to collect= current and reliable information for ongoing negotiations among CANCOPY,= the Provincial and Territorial Library Director's Council (PTLDC) and the= Council of Administrators of Large Urban Public Libraries (CALUPL) for a= model photocopying licence for public libraries. This report documents the= findings of a photocopying survey sponsored by CANCOPY with the support of= the PTLDC and CALUPL. Conducted between January and April 1996, the survey= was national in scope, with the exception of Quebec in which CANCOPY does= not operate.

2) Schwartz, Edward - **NetActivism: How= Citizens Use the Internet**. Sebastopol, CA: Songline Studios, 1996. = (Call # Prof 384.3 Sch)

Author Ed Schwartz, who was a speaker at the Telecommunities '97 Conference= in Halifax, illustrates how the Internet has returned political power, once= limited to professional politicians and special interest groups, to grass= roots people. Schwartz shows how political and social activists can= marshal their forces, broadcast their views and build alliances on the= Internet. The book deals with topics such as getting connected to the= Internet, finding information, advocacy, neighbourhoods and virtual= politics. -- Frank Oram

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